

ARCHÆOLOGIA AMERICANA.



DISCOVERY OF THE RIVER MISSISSIPPI

AND THE

ADJACENT COUNTRY.

[The following Account was first published in France, near the close of the seventeenth century. It was soon after translated into English, and republished in London. The work being out of print, it is here introduced as a preliminary article to more recent discoveries in that interesting territory.]



A new Discovery of a large Country in the Northern America, extending above four thousand miles. By Father LEWIS HENNEPIN.

A VOYAGE TO NORTH AMERICA.

FINDING in myself a strong inclination to retire from the world, I entered into the Franciscan order, where I was overjoyed in reading the travels of the fathers of my own order, who were indeed the first that undertook missions into any foreign country. I thought nothing greater or more glorious than to instruct the ignorant and barbarous, and lead them to the light of the gospel. In order to

which I went missionary for Canada, by command from my superiours; and embarked at Rochelle, in company of Mr. de Laval, since bishop of Quebec, the capital city of Canada. Our crew was about one hundred men, to three fourths of whom I administered the sacrament, they being catholicks. I likewise performed divine service every day when the weather was calm, and we sung the Itinerary of the clergy, translated into French verse, after evening prayers.

I shall omit the accidents that befel us, being such only as are inseparable companions of all great voyages. Soon after my arrival, I was sent in mission about one hundred and twenty leagues beyond Quebec, accompanied by father Luke Buisset. We went up the river St. Lawrence southwards, till we came to fort Frontenac, distant from Quebec one hundred leagues. It was built to prevent the excursions of the Iroquese, and to interrupt the trade of skins these savages maintain with the inhabitants of Newyork, who furnish them with commodities at cheaper rates than the French of Canada.

The Iroquese are an insolent and barbarous nation, and have shed the blood of more than two millions of people in that vast extended country. They would never cease from disturbing the repose of the Europeans, were it not for fear of their fire arms. For they entertain no commerce with them unless it be for arms, which they buy on purpose to use against their neighbours; and by means of which they have extended their bloody conquests five or six hundred leagues beyond their own precincts, ~~exterminating~~ whatever nation they hate.

I had already acquired some small knowledge of the Iroquese language; and father Luke and I translated the Creed, Lord's Prayer, and Litany, which we caused them to get by heart, and repeat to their children. They pronounce no labial letters, such as B, P, M, F. Here we remained two years and a half, till we saw our house of mission finished, and then returned in a canoe down the river St. Lawrence to Quebec.

Having tarried there till those who were expected from Europe to bear part in this discovery were arrived, I embarked in a small canoe, made of the bark of birch trees, carrying nothing with me but a portable chapel, one blanket, and a mat of rushes, which was to serve me for bed and quilt. I arrived at fort Frontenac the second of November, 1678, and on the eighteenth embarked in a brigantine of about ten tons and fifteen men, the Sieur de la Motte, commander. We sailed on till we came to the further end of the lake Ontario, and on the sixth of January entered the river Niagara; where we set our carpenters and the rest of the crew to work in building a fort and some houses; but foreseeing that this was like to give jealousy to the Iroquese, and to the English who dwell near them, and have a great commerce with them, we told those of the village of Niagara, that we did not intend to build a fort on the bank of their river, but only a great store house to keep the commodities we had brought to supply their occasions. And, to remove their suspicion, Mr. de la Motte thought it absolutely necessary to send an embassy to the Iroquese; telling me, "He was resolved to take along with him seven

men out of sixteen that we were in all, and desired me to accompany him because I understood in a manner the language of their nation." We passed through forests thirty two leagues, and after five days journey came to a great village, and were immediately carried to the cabin of their principal.—The younger savages washed our feet, and rubbed them over with the grease of deer, wild goats, and oil of bears. They are for the most part tall and well shaped, covered with a sort of robe made of beavers' and wolves' skins, or black squirrels, holding a pipe or calumet in their hands. The senators of Venice do not appear with a graver countenance, and perhaps do not speak with more majesty and solidity than those ancient Iroqueses.

One of our men who well understood their language, told the assembly,

1. That we were come to pay them a visit, and smoke with them in their pipes. Then we delivered our presents, consisting of axes, knives, a great collar of white and blue porcelain, with some gowns. The same presents were renewed upon every point we proposed to them.

2. We desired them to give notice to the five cantons of their nation, that were about to build a ship or great canoe above the great fall of the river Niagara, to go and fetch European commodities by a more convenient passage than that of the river St. Lawrence, whose rapid currents make it dangerous and long. And that by these means we should afford them our commodities cheaper than the English of Boston, or the Dutch, at that time masters, of Newyork. This pretence was specious enough,

and very well contrived to engage the barbarous nation to extirpate the English and Dutch out of that part of America.

3. We told them that we should provide them at the river Niagara with a blacksmith and a gunsmith to mend their guns, axes, &c. they having nobody among them that understood that trade. We added many other reasons which we thought proper to persuade them to favour our design. The presents we made unto them in cloth or iron, were worth above four hundred livres, besides some other European commodities very scarce in that country; for the best reasons in the world are not listened to among them unless they are enforced with presents.

The next day their speaker answered our discourse article by article, seeming to be pleased with our proposals though they were not really so, having a greater inclination for the English and Dutch than for us. Whilst we were with them, their parties had made an excursion towards Virginia, and brought two prisoners. They spared the life of one, but put to death the other with most exquisite torments. They commonly use this inhumanity towards all their prisoners, and their torments sometimes last a month. When they have brought them into their canton, they lay them on pieces of wood like a St. Andrew's cross, to which they tie their legs and arms, and expose them to gnats and flies, who sting them to death. Children cut pieces of flesh out of their flanks, thighs, or other parts, and boiling them, force those poor souls to eat thereof. Their parents eat some them-

selves, and the better to inspire into their children a hatred of their enemies, give them some of their blood to drink. This cruelty obliged us to leave them sooner than we would have done, to shew them the horror we had of their inhumanity, and never eat with them afterwards; but returned the same way we went through the woods to the river Niagara, where we arrived the fourteenth of January, much fatigued with our voyage, having no food on the way but Indian corn. Mr. de la Motte, no longer able to endure so laborious a life, gave over his design, and returned to Canada, having about two hundred leagues to travel.

On the twentieth, Mr. de la Salle arrived from fort Frontenac with a great bark to supply us with provisions, rigging and tackling for the ship we designed to build at the mouth of the lake Erie; but that bark was unfortunately cast away on the lake Ontario, within two leagues of Niagara. On the twenty-second, we went two leagues above the great fall of Niagara, where we made a dock for building the ship. Mr. de la Salle returned to fort Frontenac, leaving one Tonti, an Italian, for our commander. He undertook this journey afoot over the snow, having no other provision but a little sack of roasted Indian corn. However, he got home safely with two men and a dog, who dragged his baggage over the frozen snow.

Most of the Iroqueuse were now gone to wage war on the other side the lake Erie, and our men continued with great application to build our ship; for the Iroqueuse who were left behind, were not so insolent as before, though they came sometimes to

our dock, and expressed some discontent at what we were doing.

We made all the haste we could to get our ship afloat, though not altogether finished, to prevent their designs of burning it. She was called the Griffin, about sixty tons, and carried five small guns. We fired three guns, and sung *Te Deum*; and carrying our hammocks aboard, the same day were out of the reach of the savages.

Before we could proceed in our intended discovery, I was obliged to return to fort Frontenac, to bring along with me two monks of my own order, to help me in the function of my ministry. I concealed part of the discouragements I had met with, because I designed to engage father Gabriel and Zenobe in our voyage. Having dispatched our affairs, we three went aboard a brigantine, and in a short time arrived at the river which runs into the lake Ontario, where we continued several days, our men being very busy in bartering their commodities with the natives, who exchanged their skins for knives, guns, powder and shot, but especially brandy, which they love above all things. Mr. de la Salle arrived in a canoe eight days after. These impediments retarded us so long that we could not reach the river Niagara before the thirtieth of July. Father Gabriel and I went over land to view the great Fall, the like whereof is not in the whole world. It is compounded of two great cross streams of water and two falls, with an isle sloping along the middle of it. The waters which fall from this vast height do foam and boil after the most hideous manner imaginable, making an outrageous noise more terri-

ble than that of thunder ; so that when the wind blows from the south, their dismal roaring may be heard above fifteen leagues off.

The river Niagara having thrown itself down this incredible precipice, continues its impetuous course for two leagues with an inexpressible rapidity ; and the brinks are so prodigious high, that it makes one tremble to look steadily on the water, rolling along with a rapidity not to be imagined. It is so rapid above the descent, that it violently hurries down the wild beasts, endeavouring to pass it to feed on the other side, casting them down headlong above six hundred feet. A bark or greater vessel may pass from fort Frontenac until you come within two leagues of the Fall, for which two leagues the people are obliged to carry their goods over land ; but the way is very good, and the trees are but few, and they chiefly furs and oaks. Were it not for this vast cataract which interrupts navigation, we might sail with barks or greater vessels above four hundred and fifty leagues further.

On the seventh of August we went on board, being in all thirtyfour men, and sailed from the mouth of the lake Erie, and on the eleventh entered a streight thirty leagues long and one broad, except in the middle, which makes the lake of St. Claire. On the twentythird, we got into the lake Huron. The twentysixth we had so violent a storm that we brought down our yards and topmasts, and let the ship drive at the mercy of the wind, knowing no place to run into to shelter ourselves. Mr. la Salle, notwithstanding he was a courageous man, began to fear, and told us we were undone ; whereupon

every body fell on his knees to say his prayers and prepare himself for death, except our pilot, whom we could never oblige to pray ; and he did nothing all that while but curse and swear against Mr. la Salle, who had brought him thither to make him perish in a nasty lake, and lose the glory he had acquired by his long and happy navigations on the ocean. When the wind abated we hoisted our sail, and the next day arrived at *Missihmakinak*.

On the second of September we weighed anchor and sailed to an island at the mouth of the bay of Puans, forty leagues from *Missihmakinak*. The chief among them, who had been formerly in Canada, received us with all the civility imaginable. Mr. la Salle, without asking any other body's advice, resolved to send back the ship to Niagara, laden with furs and skins, to discharge his debts. Our pilot and five men with him were therefore sent back, and ordered to return with all imaginable speed to join us towards the southern parts of the lake, where we should stay for them among the Illinois. They sailed the eighteenth with a westerly wind, and fired a gun as taking leave. It was never known what course they steered, nor how they perished ; but it is supposed that the ship struck upon a sand, and was there buried. This was a great loss for Mr. la Salle and other adventurers, for that ship with its cargo cost above sixty thousand livres.

We continued our voyage in four canoes, being fourteen men in all, and departed the nineteenth of September. We steered to the south towards the continent, distant from the island near forty leagues. On the first of October, after twelve leagues rowing,

we were in so great danger by stress of weather, that we were forced to throw ourselves into the water, and carry our canoes on our shoulders to save them from being broken to pieces. I carried father Gabriel on my back, whose great age, being sixty-five years, did not permit him to venture into the water.

Having no acquaintance with the savages of the village near which we landed, we prepared to make a vigorous defence in case of an attack, and in order to it, possessed ourselves of a rising ground where we could not be surprized. We then sent three men to buy provisions in the village, with the calumet or pipe of peace, which those of the island had given us. And because the calumet of peace is the most sacred thing among the savages, I shall here describe the same.

It is a large tobacco pipe, of a red, black, or white marble. The head is finely polished. The quill, which is commonly two foot and a half long, is made of a pretty strong reed or cane, adorned with feathers of all colours, interlaced with locks of women's hair. Every nation adorns it as they think fit, and according to the birds they have in their country.

Such a pipe is a safe conduct amongst all the allies of the nation who has given it. And in all embassies the calumet is carried as a symbol of peace. The savages being generally persuaded that some great misfortune would befall them, if they should violate the publick faith of the calumet. They fill this pipe with the best tobacco they have, and then present it to those with whom they have concluded

any great affair, and smoke out of the same after them.

Our three men, provided with this pipe, and very well armed, went to the little village three leagues from the place where we landed; but finding nobody therein, took some Indian corn, and left instead of it some goods, to let them see that we were no robbers nor their enemies. However twenty of them armed with axes, small guns, bows and clubs, advanced near the place where we stood; whereupon Mr. la Salle with four men very well armed, went toward them to speak with them, and desired them to come near us, for fear a party of our men who were gone a hunting, should meet with them and kill them. They sat down at the foot of the eminence where we were posted, and Mr. la Salle spoke to them all the while concerning his voyage, which he told them he had undertaken for their good and advantage. This was only to amuse them till our three men returned, who appearing with the calumet of peace, the savages made a great shout, and rose and began to dance. We excused our taking some of their corn, telling them we had left the true value of it in goods; which they took so well, that they sent immediately for more, and gave us next day as much as we could carry away in our canoes. They retired towards evening, and Mr. la Salle ordered some trees to be cut down, and laid across the way, to prevent any surprize from them. The oldest of them came to us next morning with their calumet of peace, and brought us some wild goats. We presented them with some axes, knives,

and several little toys for their wives, with which they were well pleased.

We left that place the second of October, and coasted along the lake, which is so steep that we could hardly find any place to land. The violence of the wind obliged us to drag our canoes sometimes to the top of the rocks to prevent their being dashed in pieces. The stormy weather lasted four days, during which we suffered very much, and our provisions failed us again ; which, with the fatigues of rowing, caused old father Gabriel to faint away in such manner, that I thought verily he could not live. We had no other subsistence but a handful of Indian corn once every twentyfour hours, which we roasted or else boiled in water ; and yet rowed almost every day from morning till night. Being in this dismal distress, we saw upon the coast a great many ravens and eagles, from whence we conjectured there was some prey ; and having landed upon that place, we found above the half of a fat wild goat which the wolves had strangled. This provision was very acceptable to us, and the rudest of our men could not but praise the divine Providence who took so particular a care of us.

Having thus refreshed ourselves, we continued our voyage directly to the southern parts of the lake. On the sixteenth, we met with abundance of game. A savage we had with us killed several stags and wild goats, and our men a great many turkies, very fat and big ; wherewith we provided ourselves for several days, and so embarked again. On the first of November we came to the mouth of the river of the Miamis, which runs from the south and

falls into the lake. Here we spent all that month in building a fort forty feet long, and eighty broad; made with great square pieces of timber laid one upon the other.

On the third of December we embarked, being thirtythree men, in eight canoes, and having rowed about twentyfive leagues up the river Miamis to the southwest, we could not find the place where we were to land, and carry our canoes and equipage into the river of the Illinois, which falls into Mississippi. Our savage who was hunting ashore, not finding us at the place of portage, came higher up the river, and told us we had missed it. So we returned and carried our canoes over land to the head of the Illinois river, which is but a league and a half from that of Miamis. We continued our course upon this river very near the whole month of December, towards the end of which we arrived at the village of the Illinois, about one hundred and thirty leagues from fort Miamis. We found nobody in the village, which caused a great perplexity among us; for though we wanted provisions, yet we durst not meddle with the corn they had laid under ground for their subsistence, and to sow their lands with; it being the most sensible wrong one can do them, in their opinion, to take some of their corn in their absence. However, our necessity being very great, and it being impossible to continue our voyage without it, Mr. la Salle took about forty bushels of it, hoping to appease them with some presents.

We embarked again with this fresh provision, and fell down the river the first of January, 1680.

We took the elevation of the pole, which was thirty-three degrees, fortyfive minutes. Although we used all the precaution we could, we found ourselves on a sudden in the middle of their camp, which took up both sides of the river. The Illinois being much terrified, though they were several thousand men, tendered us the calumet of peace, and we offered them ours. Mr. la Salle presented them with Martinico tobacco, and some axes. He told them, "He knew how necessary their corn was to them; but that being reduced to an unspeakable necessity when he came to their village, and seeing no probability to subsist, he had been forced to take some corn from their habitations without their leave. That he would give them axes and other things, in lieu of it, if they could spare it; and if they could not, they were free to take it again." The savages considered our proposals, granted our demands, and made an alliance with us.

Some days after, Nikanape, brother to the most considerable man among them, who was then absent, invited us to a great feast. And before we sat down, told us, "That he had invited us not so much to give us a treat, as to endeavour to dissuade us from the resolution we had taken to go down to the sea by the great river Mississippi." He said, "That the banks of that river were inhabited by barbarous and bloody nations, and that several had perished upon the same enterprize." Our Interpreter told him by order of Mr. la Salle, "That we were much obliged to him for his advice; but that the difficulties and dangers he had mentioned, would make our enterprize still more glorious. That we

feared the Master of the life of all men, who ruled the sea and all the world, and therefore would think it happiness to lay down our lives to make his name known to all his creatures." However Nikanape's discourse had put some of our men under such terrible apprehensions, that we could never recover their courage nor remove their fears; so that six of them who had the guard that night, (among which were two sawyers, the most necessary of our workmen for building our ship) ran away, taking with them what they thought necessary. But considering the country through which they were to travel, and the season of the year, we may say, that for avoiding an uncertainty, they exposed themselves to a most certain danger.

Mr. la Salle seeing those six men were gone, exhorted the rest to continue firm in their duty; assuring them, that if any were afraid of venturing themselves upon the river of Mississippi, because of the dangers Nikanape had mentioned, he would give them leave to return next spring to Canada, and allow them a canoe to make their voyage; whereas they could not venture to return home at this time of the year, without exposing themselves to perish with hunger, cold, or the hands of the savages.

On the fifteenth, we made choice of an eminence on the bank of the river, defended on that side by the river, and on two others by two deep ditches made by the rains, so that it was accessible only by one way. We cast a line to join those two natural ditches, and made the eminence steep on every side, supporting the earth with great pieces of timber. By the first of March, our fort was near finished,

and we named it Crevecœur, because the desertion of our men, with the difficulties we laboured under, had almost broke our hearts. We had also built a bark for the continuance of our discovery. It was fortytwo feet long by the keel, and was in such a forwardness, that we should have been in a condition to sail in a very short time, had we been provided with all other necessaries. But hearing nothing of our ship Griffin, and therefore wanting the rigging and other tackle we expected by her, we found ourselves in great perplexity, and did not know what to do in this sad juncture, being above five hundred leagues from fort Frontenac ; whither it was almost impossible to return at that time, because the snow made travelling very dangerous by land, and the ice made it impracticable to our canoes.

Mr. la Salle did now no longer doubt but his beloved Griffin was lost ; but neither this nor the other difficulties dejected him. His great courage buoyed him up, and he resolved with three men to return to fort Frontenac by land, notwithstanding the snow and the unspeakable dangers attending so great a journey, and to bring along with him the necessary things to proceed on our discovery ; while I with two men should go in a canoe to the river Mississippi, to get the friendship of the nations inhabiting the banks thereof. Then calling his men together, told them, "He would leave Mr. Tonti to command in the fort, and desired them to obey his orders in his absence, to live in a Christian union and charity, to be courageous and firm in their design." He assured them, "He would return with

all the speed imaginable, and bring with him a fresh supply of meat, ammunition, and rigging for our bark ; and that in the mean time he left them arms and other things necessary for a vigorous defence, in case their enemies should attack them before his return."

Then telling me, " That he expected I should depart without further delay," he embraced me and gave me a calumet of peace, with two men to manage our canoe, Picard and Ako, to whom he gave some commodities to the value of about one thousand livres, to trade with the savages or make presents. He gave to me in particular, and for my own use, ten knives, twelve shoemaker's awls or bodkins, a small roll of Martinico tobacco, two pounds of rassade, i. e. little pearls or rings of coloured glass to make bracelets for the savages, and a small parcel of needles ; telling me, " He would have given me a greater quantity if it had been in his power."

Thus relying on the providence of God, and receiving the blessing of father Gabriel, I embraced all our men, and took my leave of Mr. la Salle, who set out a few days after for Canada with three men, without any provisions but what they killed in their journey, during which they suffered very much by cold weather, snow, and hunger.

We set out from fort Crevecoeur, twentieth of February, myself, Picard and Ako, and when we had gone fifty leagues down the river, we came to the place where it falls into the Mississippi, between thirtyfive and thirtysix degrees of latitude. The Mississippi runs to the south southwest, between

two ridges of mountains, is in some places a league broad, and a half a league where it is narrowest. The ice which came down stopt us here till the twelfth of March. Then after prayers we embarked, and continuing our course down the river, we discovered three savages on the fifteenth, and landing, marched up to them; whereupon they ran away. But after some signs, one returned, and presented us the calumet of peace, which when we had received, the two others came back. We could not understand one word of their language; and when we named two or three different nations to them, one answered three times, Chiquacha. They gave us some pelicans they had killed with their arrows, and we presented them with part of our meat. Two days after, we saw many savages near the river, crying aloud, Sasacouest, that is, Who goes there? as I have been informed. They sent a pirogue or heavy wooden canoe towards us, wherein were the three savages we had met two days before. We presented our calumet of peace, which they received, but gave us to understand by signs that we must go to the Akansa, pointing to the savages ashore. We could not avoid it; and as soon as we were landed, the three Chiquachas took our canoe upon their shoulders, and carried it to the village. These savages received us very kindly, and presented us with beans, Indian corn, and flesh to eat. We made them also a present of some of our European commodities, which they admired, putting their fingers upon their mouths, especially when they saw our guns. The eighteenth we embarked again, after having been entertained with dancing and feasting,

and carried away our commodities, though the savages were very loth to part with them ; but having accepted our calumet of peace, they did not presume to stop us by force.

We passed by the nations of Taensa and Coroa, by both which we were kindly received, and on the twentyfourth came to the nation of Quiniquissa. The next day we came to a point where the Mississippi divides itself into three channels. We took the middle one, which is very broad and deep. The water began there to taste brackish, but four leagues lower was as salt as the sea. We rowed about four leagues further and discovered the sea. The mouth of the river is very deep, without being interrupted with any sands ; so that great ships may go up as far as the Illinois river, which is two hundred leagues. Its course, from its source to the sea, may be eight hundred leagues, including windings and turnings. It falls into the gulph of Mexico, between twenty-seven and twentyeight degrees of latitude. Its mouth may be about thirty leagues from Rio Bravo, sixty from Palmas, and eighty or one hundred from Rio Panuco, the nearest habitation of the Spaniards.

My two men were very glad of this discovery ; but on the other hand they expressed a great deal of dissatisfaction to have been at such trouble without making any profit, having found no furs to exchange for their commodities. They were also much afraid of the Spaniards of New Mexico, and were perpetually telling me, "That if they were taken, the Spaniards would never spare their lives, or at least give them the liberty to return into Europe." I knew their fears were not altogether un-

reasonable; and therefore I resolved to go no further, though I had no reason to be afraid for myself, our order being so numerous in New Mexico, that on the contrary, I might expect to have had in that country a peaceable and easy life.

We lay, during the time we were ashore, under our canoe, supported with four forks, and made curtains of some rolls of birch bark, hanging from the top to the ground, to defend us from the rain. We saw nobody, and therefore cannot tell whether that coast be inhabited. We squared a tree of twelve feet high, and making a cross of it, erected it in that place, leaving there a letter signed by me and my two men, containing an account of our voyage, country, and profession. Then kneeling near the cross, we sung some hymns, and embarked again on the first of April, to return towards the source of the river.

It is observable that during the whole course of our sailing, God protected us against the crocodiles, which are very numerous in that river, especially towards the mouth. They looked dreadful, and would have attacked us, had we not been very careful to avoid them.

Our canoe being loaded with three men only and our provisions, did not draw three inches water, and therefore we could row very near the shore, and avoid the current of the river. The next day, April second, we saw, towards break of day, a great smoke not far from us, and soon after discovered four savage women loaded with wood, marching as fast as they could to get to their village before us. But some buzzards coming near us, one of my men

could not forbear to shoot at them, which so frightened the women that they left their wood, and ran away to their village, where they arrived before us. The savages having heard the noise, were in as great fear as their wives, and left their village upon our approach. But I landing, immediately advanced alone with the calumet of peace, whereupon they returned, and received us with all the respect and civility imaginable. We made them some small presents to show our gratitude, and left that place April the fourth, and rowed with such diligence that we arrived the same day at Koroa. I was surprized to see their Indian corn, which was left very green, grown already to maturity; but I have learned since, that their corn is ripe sixty days after it is sown. They have three or four crops of Indian corn in a year, having no other winter than some rain. They have all sorts of trees we have in Europe, and many others unknown to us. There are the finest cedars in the world, and another tree from which drops a most fragrant gum, which in my opinion exceeds our best perfumes. The cotton trees are of a prodigious height; the savages make them hollow with fire, to make their pirogues of them. We saw some of them all of a piece above one hundred feet long. They told us, "That to the westward are some beasts who carry men upon their backs," and shewed us the hoof and part of the leg of one, which was certainly the hoof of a horse; and surely horses are not utterly unknown in the northern America; for near the cape named by us St. Anthony, we saw a horse and some other beasts painted upon the rock

with red colours by the savages. But whereas we had been told that the Spaniards of New Mexico lived not above forty leagues from them, and supplied them with European commodities, we found nothing among them that might be suspected to come from thence, unless it be some little pieces of glass strung upon a thread, with which the women adorn their heads. We left the habitations of the Akansas, the fourth of April, and during sixty leagues saw no savage. Our provisions being spent, we had nothing to live upon but the game we killed, or the fish we could catch. On the twelfth, as my two men were boiling a buzzard, and myself refitting our canoe on the bank of the river, I perceived on a sudden, about two o'clock in the afternoon, no less than fifty canoes made of bark, manned with one hundred and twenty savages stark naked, coming down the river with an extraordinary swiftness, to surprize the Miamis and Illinois their enemies.

We threw away the broth which was preparing, and getting aboard as fast as we could, made towards them, crying out in the Iroqueuse and Algonquin languages, "Comrades, we are men of wooden canoes;" for so they call those that sail in great vessels. This had no effect, for they understood not what we said; so that surrounding us immediately, they began to let fly their arrows at us, till the eldest amongst them perceiving I had a calumet of peace in my hand, came up to us and prevented our being murdered by their warriors.

They presently jumped out of their canoes, some upon land, others into the water; surrounding us

on all sides with shrieks and outcries that were indeed terrifying. It was to no purpose to resist, being but three to so great a number. One of them snatched the pipe of peace out of my hand. We presented them with some small pieces of Martinico tobacco, and made signs to them with our oars upon the sand, that the Miamis their enemies, whom they were in search of, had passed the river, and were gone to join the Illinois.

Being then out of all hopes of surprising their enemies, three or four of the eldest of them laid their hands on my head, and began to weep bitterly, accompanying their tears with such mournful accents as can hardly be expressed; while I, with a sorry handkerchief I had left, made shift to dry up their tears; however, to very little purpose; for refusing to smoke in our calumet, they thereby gave us to understand, that their design was still to murder us; and one hundred of their leaders coming up to us, made us to understand by signs, that their warriors were resolved upon our death. This obliged me to apply myself to their chiefs, and presented them with six hatchets, fifteen knives and some pieces of tobacco; after which, bending my neck and pointing to a hatchet, I signified to them, by that submission, that we threw ourselves on their mercy.

The present had the good effect to soften some of them, who, according to their custom, gave us some beavers' flesh to eat, themselves putting the three first bits in our mouths, having first blown upon it, because it was hot; after this they set their platter before us, made of the bark of a tree, leaving us at

liberty to feed after our own fashion. These civilities did not hinder us from passing the night away very uneasily, because in the evening, before they went to sleep, they had returned us our calumet of peace. The two canoemen resolved to sell their lives as dear as they could, and to defend themselves like men to the last, in case they should attack us. For my part I told them, I resolved to suffer myself to be slain without the least resistance, in imitation of our Saviour. However, we watched all night by turns, that we might not be surprized in our sleep.

The next morning early, one of their captains who had been for killing us, came and demanded my pipe of peace; it being delivered him, he filled it with tobacco, and made the rest who had been for putting us to death to smoke in it; then he made signs that we must go along with them into their country, to which they were then returning. This proposal was very welcome to us, and we rowed in their company for nineteen days together, sometimes north, and sometimes northeast, according to the best observations we could make by our compass; so that after these barbarians had forced us to follow them, we made more than two hundred and fifty leagues up the river Mississippi, and we were got about one hundred and fifty leagues up the same, above that of the Illinois, when we were first taken by them. One of the nineteen days of our most tiresome voyage, a captain called Aquipaguetin, who afterwards adopted me for his son, had killed a large fat deer, to which he invited the chief captains of the warriors. After the repast, the savages, with their hair anointed with oil of bears, and stuck all

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over with red and white feathers, and their heads covered with the down of birds, began to dance with their hands upon their hips, and striking their feet with great force against the ground. During the dance, one of the sons of the master of the ceremonies made them all smoke in the pipe of war, himself shedding abundance of tears. The father in the mean while laying his hands on our heads, and lifting up his eyes to heaven, bathed himself in tears. As for us, as far as we could judge, all this grimace boded us no good; and indeed, we afterwards understood, that he meant nothing less than our destruction by it. But finding the opposition he was like to meet from the other chiefs, who were of a contrary opinion, he was content to suffer us to reembark, resolving, however, to make use of some other stratagem to get into his own hands, by little and little, the rest of our things; not daring to take them from us openly by force, for fear of the rest of his own nation; by which it plainly appears, that he was a crafty designing knave. His son was killed by the Miamis, and finding he could not revenge himself on that nation, vented his passion upon us. Having thus travelled nineteen days in our canoe by water, we came within six leagues of the fall of St. Anthony, where they held an assembly to consult what they should do with us. At last they separated and gave us to three of their chiefs, instead of three of their sons which had been killed in the war; then they seized our canoe and took away all our equipage; our canoe they pulled to pieces; their own they hid among the alders, so that though we might have gone conveniently enough quite up

into their country by water, yet we were obliged by their conduct to travel no less than sixty leagues afoot.

Our ordinary marches were from break of day till ten at night; and when we met with any rivers, we swam them, themselves (who for the most part are of an extraordinary size) carrying our clothes and equipage on their heads. We never eat but once in twentyfour hours, and then nothing but a few scraps of meat dried in smoke, after their fashion, which they afforded us with abundance of regret.

I was so weak that I often lay down, resolving rather to die than follow these savages any farther, who travelled at a rate so extraordinary, as far surpasses the strength of any European. However, to hasten us, they sometimes set fire to the dry grass in the meadows through which we passed, so that our choice was, march or burn. When we had thus travelled sixty leagues afoot, and undergone all the fatigues of hunger, thirst, and cold, besides a thousand outrages daily done to our persons; as soon as we approached their habitations, which are situated in morasses inaccessible to their enemies, they thought it a proper time to divide the merchandize they had taken from us. Here they were like to fall out and cut one another's throats about the roll of Martinico tobacco, which might still weigh about fifty pounds. Then arose a high dispute about the distribution they were to make of our persons. At last, Aquipaguetin, as head of the party, carried it; who turning towards me, presented me his calumet of peace to smoke in, receiving from me at the same time that which we had brought, and then adopted

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me for his son, in the room of him he had lost in the war.

Two other captains did the same by the two canoemen. This separation was very grievous to us, though somewhat allayed by the satisfaction we had to find our lives were safe. Picard, being sensible of the uncertain condition his life was in among so barbarous a people, took me aside to confess him. I should have been overjoyed to have seen Ako so well disposed. Being thus parted, the savages led us away, each to his own village.

I came to Aquipaguetin's habitation in the month of May, 1680. The next day he shewed me to six or seven of his wives, telling them that they were to esteem me as one of their sons, and ordered those about him to give me the title that was due to the rank which I was to hold amongst my new kindred.

I spent three months very ill in this place among the Issati and Nadovessians. My new father gave me nothing to eat but a few wild oats five or six times a week, and the roes of dried fish. He sent me into a neighbouring isle with his wives, children and servants, where I digged with a pickaxe and shovel I had recovered from those that robbed us. Here we planted tobacco, and some European pulse which I brought from thence, and were highly prized by Aquipaguetin.

During my stay among them, there arrived four savages in embassy, who said they were come above five hundred leagues from the west, and had been four moons upon the way. They assured us there was no such place as the streight of Anian, and that they had marched without resting, except to sleep,

or kill game for their subsistence, and had not seen or passed over any great lake; by which phrase they always mean the sea.

They farther informed us, that the nation of the Assenipoulaes, who lie northeast from the Issati, was not above six or seven days' journey from us; that none of the nations within their knowledge, who lie to the west or northwest of them, had any great lake about their countries, which were very large, but only rivers, which, coming from the north, run across the countries of their neighbouring nations which border on their confines on the side of the great lake, which in their language is the same as sea. They farther assured us, that there were very few forests in the countries through which they passed in their way hither, insomuch that now and then they were so put to it for fuel, that they were forced to make fires of bulls' dung to boil their victuals. All these circumstances make it appear, that there is no such place as the streights of Anian, as we usually see them set down in maps. And whatever efforts have been made for many years past by the English and Dutch, the two nations of the world who are the greatest navigators, to find out a passage to China and Japan through the frozen sea, they have not yet been able to effect it. But, by the help of my discovery, and the assistance of God, I doubt not but a passage may still be found, and that an easy one too. For example; one may be transported into the Pacifick sea by rivers which are large and capable of carrying great vessels, and from thence it is easy to go to China and Japan without crossing the equinoctial line; and in all

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probability Japan is on the same continent as America.

Toward the end of July, the *Sieur de Luth*, accompanied with five men, arrived in our camp from Canada ; and because I had some knowledge of the language of the *Issati*, he desired that I, with *Picard* and *Ako*, might accompany him to the villages of those people. I was very willing to undertake it, especially when I understood that they had not received the sacraments in the whole two years and a half that they had been out upon their voyage. We arrived at the villages of the *Issati* the 14th of August, and having exchanged our commodities we returned to the camp. Towards the end of September, we let them understand, that to procure them iron and other merchandizes which was useful for them, it was convenient that we should return to Canada ; and that at a certain time when we should agree upon between us, they should come half the way with their furs, and we the other half with our European commodities. Upon this, they held a great Council, and consented to our return. *Ouasicourde* their chief captain gave us some bushels of wild oats for our subsistence by the way, having first regaled us in the best manner he could. These oats are better and more wholesome than rice. Then, with a pencil, he marked down on a sheet of paper which I had left, the course we were to keep for four hundred leagues together.

We put ourselves into two canoes, being eight Europeans of us in all. We fell down the river of *St. Francis* into the *Mississippi*, and thence went up

the river Ouiconsin, navigable for large vessels above one hundred leagues ; then we carried our canoes over land half a league. Thus having made more than four hundred leagues by water since our departure from the country of the Issati, we arrived at last at the great bay of the Puans, where we found many Canadians, who were come hither to trade ; they having some wine with them, I administered the sacrament and preached. After two days stay, we departed ; and after one hundred leagues rowing, having coasted along the great bay of Puans, we arrived at *Missihmakinak*, where we were forced to winter.

We parted from *Missilimakinak* in Easter week 1681, and having rowed one hundred leagues along the side of the lake Huron, we passed the streights, which are thirty leagues through, and the lake of St. Clair, which is in the middle ; thence over the lake Erie to the fall of Niagara, from whence we carried our canoe two leagues below, and came to the lake of Ontario or Frontenac. When we came to the fort, we were kindly received by father Luke Buisset and Mr. la Fleur, who had the command of the fort in the absence of Mr. la Salle. But our men being eager to return to Canada, we took leave and went for Quebec. In two days we came to Montreal, sixty leagues. Count Frontenac looking out at a window saw me in the canoe, and took me for father Luke Fiilatre, who served him as chaplain ; but one of his guards knowing me again, went to him and acquainted him with my coming. He was so kind as to come and meet me, and gave me the best reception that a missionary might expect

from a person of that rank and quality. He wondered to see me so much altered, being lean, tired, and tanned. He carried me to his own house, where I continued twelve days to refresh myself. He forbade all his servants to give me any thing to eat, lest I should fall sick if left to my own discretion after so long hardships; and gave me himself what he thought best.

When I desired his permission to go to Quebec, he appointed two of his guards, who understood very well to manage a canoe, to carry me thither, where the provincial commissary of the Recollects ordered me to return to Europe.



*An Account of Mr. LA SALLE's undertaking to discover the River MISSISSIPPI, by way of the Gulph of Mexico. By Father LEWIS HEN-
NEPIN.*

MR. Robert Cavalier de la Salle was a person qualified for the greatest undertakings, and may be justly ranked amongst the most famous travellers that ever were. This will appear to whomsoever will consider that he spent his own estate about the greatest, most important, and most perilous discovery that has been yet made. His design was to find out a passage from the northern to the south sea without crossing the line, which a great many have hitherto sought in vain. The river Mississippi does not indeed run that way; but he was in hopes by means of that river to discover some other river